

Housing Committee, 2-5-15

Testimony of Elaine Peters, Mothers for Justice

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Good Evening Senator Winfield, Representative Butler, and members of the Housing Committee.

My name is Elaine Peters. I live at 480 Ferry Street in New Haven. I am multi-media artist and a long- time member of Mothers for Justice. I am here today, to strongly oppose the bills that repeal or amend the Affordable Housing Appeals Process (8-30g). These bills will severely limit affordable housing choices for low-income households.

In 2012 Mothers for Justice surveyed 472 people in New Haven about their housing needs and 71% reported that they had experienced homelessness. For a number of years I was **one of those people** sleeping on friend's couches and for a short time, on the street. Today, I live in public housing but have many concerns for people who struggle with unaffordable rents and also the placement of public housing in dilapidated run down areas. When people are given the ability to live in safe and diverse communities, their perspectives are broadened, they have more opportunities to get better jobs and a better education and can fully integrate into the community.

Housing subsidies are an excellent solution for reducing homelessness. Mothers for Justice would like to see \$20million of funding for RAP (Rental Assistance Program) certificates to be included in this year's budget.

Thank you.